



ARGENTINA

ARGENTINA - INLAND WATERWAYS

A. POLICIES

1. The basic Argentine policy with respect to inland waterways is to supplement inadequate Argentine railroad and highway transportation and to promote trade with Uruguay, Southern Brazil, Paraguay and Southeastern Bolivia. This form of transportation is confined essentially to the Rio de la Plata and its tributaries, the Paraguay, Parana and Uruguay rivers. It is noteworthy that regular steamer service is maintained from Buenos Aires as far as Asuncion, Paraguay, a distance of 1,630 river miles on the La Plata, Parana and Paraguay rivers.

Policy is wholly determined by the Government.

2. Policies were determined in the Ministry of Public Works until recently, when the National Economic Council was created to coordinate and integrate all forms of transport policy, including civil air.
3. As outlined in 1, inland waterway policy reflects essentially economic considerations. Some consideration, however, is given to the strategic and military value of fluvial transport, particularly in view of the importance of this transportation to the material resources of Paraguay and Uruguay and to the oil fields of Southeastern Bolivia.
4. The Argentine Government owns and operates a nationalized river fleet. While private companies and river craft builders do not appear to be actually subsidized, they do receive generous credits from the Government for the acquisition of equipment. Canal dredging and river improvements are performed by the Government.

Lacking technical experts, skilled ship builders and basic materials, the Government buys certain types of foreign-built river craft. Foreign labor is not barred.

5. Until the establishment of the state river fleet, fluvial transport was almost entirely in the hands of the Dodero lines, which maintained scheduled passenger and freight service. Dodero now controls the Alfa Airline, operating to cities in the area served by its river lines. Argentine policy regarding inland waterways must have been influenced by Dodero, in view of the long-standing pre-eminence of this private interest.

B. ORGANIZATION

1. The agencies concerned with inland waterways policy are:

The National Economic Council;

The Administration of River Transportation;
a semi-autonomous entity under the Ministry
of Public Works; and

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The General Maritime Prefecture, a dependency of the Ministry of Navy.

2. The Director General of River Transportation operates the state river fleet and is responsible for maintaining a navigable channel. He issues regulations governing all river traffic. The General Maritime Prefecture controls ports, vessel inspection, operating licenses and ship registration.
3. No apparent relation exists between the Administration of River Transportation and the General Maritime Prefecture, as they are under separate ministries. Coordination is supposed to be effected, however, at the level of the National Economic Council. There does not appear to be overlapping in the two agencies concerned with river transport.
4. Wartime conditions seriously handicapped rail and road transport, because of scarcity of fuel and lack of vehicles and equipment. To ease this situation the Government established the Administration of River Transportation and organized the state river fleet. No other agencies are expected to be created, or existing ones reorganized.
5. Fluvial transportation is not operating efficiently, because of antiquated and inadequate craft. Expansion and improvement, however, is actively promoted through the acquisition of new modern vessels.

C. ADMINISTRATION

1. The Administration of River Transportation recommends establishment of a new water transportation service to the Ministry of Public Works. The Ministry of Public Works, upon advice from the National Economic Council, directs the River Agency to establish the service. Private companies wishing to establish new services must obtain approval of the River Agency.
2. Rates are determined by the Administration of River Transportation for the state-owned fleet as well as for private companies. All modifications must be approved by this agency to assure uniformity for river traffic. Rates are based on the nature of the cargo and distance involved in the lift. There is a substantial difference between up-river and down-river rates because of extra fuel consumption and other factors. Since Argentina and other riparian countries on the Rio de la Plata river system subscribe to freedom of navigation, the New York international rate conferences apply to this river.
3. At present services are furnished only by Argentine craft. Since the state-owned line and Doderio have the same rates, competition is limited to the quality of service provided.

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4. The General Maritime Prefecture has issued voluminous rules and regulations in the interests of safety. These regulate the inspection of equipment and personnel, and the investigation of accidents. Enforcement is in the hands of the Maritime Police.
5. Officers and pilots must graduate from the state nautical school and their diplomas must be certified by The General Maritime Prefecture, which issues the appropriate licenses. Only Argentinians may become candidates for these commissions.
6. There appear to be no international agreements or arrangements. The three rivers have been traditionally considered as international waterways and thus free to navigation.
7. The latter two agencies specified in B-1 submit annual reports, including financial operating statements, to their respective ministries. Private companies are required to publish annual financial statements including operating reports.